The National Steering Group (NSG) co-chaired by the Minister for Urban Development and Minister for Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, in its meeting held on 24.11.2009, considered the matter and decided that non-starter projects may not be withdrawn and State/Cities may be given the opportunity to start the projects. In the meantime, the amount released to them but projects lying unutilized may be adjusted against future release of next instalment or new projects.

As per the guidelines of JNNURM-UIG, the funds are released by GoI as Additional Central Assistance (ACA) (100% Central grant in respect of Central share) to the State Government or its designated State Level Nodal Agency (SLNA). The Nodal Agency will in turn disburse the central assistance to ULBs or Parastatal agencies as the case may be. There is no specific report of diversion of funds released by GoI for purposes other than JNNURM by State Governments/UTs. As per Quarterly Progress Reports ending September, 2009, an amount of Rs.8986.87 crore has been released as ACA to State/UTs. The State/UTs/ULBs have released ACA alongwith their respective shares to the extent of Rs. 16702.90 crore into the project account.

Maternity benefits to women employees of BSNL

*417. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the maternity benefits extended to the women employees of BSNL;

(b) whether the recommendations of Sixth Central Pay Commission on maternity benefits, child care leave, etc. have been extended to/implemented in BSNL;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) BSNL extends 135 days of maternity leave to its women employees up to two children.

(b) to (d) The recommendations of the Sixth Central pay Commission are not applicable to BSNL. However, the case for extension of maternity leave from 135 days to 180 days is under consideration. BSNL has also taken number of measures towards the welfare of its women employees.

Committee of experts on developmental activities

†*418. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Committee of experts was constituted by the Planning Commission in May, 2006 to study and report on the developmental activities in the country;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the said expert committee has already submitted its report to the Government in April, 2009; and

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.